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In the long run it is the cultivated areas which will have to support more livestock. The expansion of crop land has progressively limited the area of natural grazing land, and increasing numbers of pastoral Bedouins are settling down to agricultural pursuits. Only cultivated land provides a large potential for increasing and improving the feed supply. At present, however, grain stubble and the grass and weeds which spring up on fallow land constitute virtually the only sources of feed for livestock in the cultivated regions. Only a very small area is in improved or "cultivated" pasture, and cropping for forage takes place only in certain limited areas. Hay and silage are not produced.

The objective must be to persuade farmers to grow feed for livestock by intercropping forage crops with cereals, putting part of their fallow into grass and legumes and converting marginal land into improved pasture. The conservation and storage of fodder must also be encouraged. A program with these objectives is, of course, bound to make very slow progress. Its feasibility must be demonstrated, and it will encounter much resistance on the part of farmers who adhere tenaciously to traditional practices.

The mission suggests, however, that a start in this direction be made over the next five or six years. For this reason the mission proposes that the government set aside about £S 500,000 over this period for an experimental demonstration program. Under this program farmers willing to try the establishment of pastures or the production of fodder crops would be given technical and financial assistance by the government. Financial assistance might be given in various forms. The government could supply all or part of the seed, help meet the cost of plowing, pay a small subsidy for the conversion of marginal land to pasture. The digging of trench silos can be performed by hand labor under supervision by the Ministry of Agriculture. Thus a number of experimental and demonstration projects might be established in different parts of Syria. The projects will no doubt reveal in time deficiencies as well as advantages in the light of which the approach and methods would have to be modified from time to time.

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VII PASTURE RESEEDING

In the Main Report we specifically recommended the reseeding of the Resafe and Palmyra desert basins where the soil is fertile, the rainfall generally higher than in other desert regions, and the possibilities of storing some of the water and distributing it evenly by means of diversion dams better than elsewhere. In parts of Australia, Morocco, Algeria and South Africa, where climatic conditions are similar to those in the Syrian desert, introduction of the following herbs and grasses has shown good results: salt bushes (*Atriplex semibaccata; Atriplex vesicatum*); blue bushes (*Kochia sp.*); crow foot (*Erodium sp.*); buffalo grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*); veldt grass (*Ehrharta calcycina*); *Lotus maroccanus;* and *Dactylis glomerata,* var. *Hispanica.* These perennials, more or less winter-hardy and drought-resistant, plus the existing flora, would probably make excellent sheep and goat pasture in Syria. The group of FAO experts which has been conducting experiments with respect to improved grazing conditions might help the Ministry of Agriculture to develop a successful program.

Since conditions in Iraq and Jordan are similar it would be advantageous if these countries were to participate in the program.

VIII LIVESTOCK

Livestock Center

We understand that a site for a center near Damascus has already been selected. We urge that stables and shelter, which would be designed to serve as models, should not be so elaborate as to be beyond the reach of the average farmer. We suggest that the main center have three separate divisions for sheep and goats, cattle, and poultry respectively, and that the two principal tasks of the staff should be to initiate a breeding program and to train Syrians in this work.

In the Sheep and Goat Division the sheep breeding program might be conducted along the following lines:

1st year: Assembling a station flock of the best indigenous type; purchase of 200-300 native ewes; and importation of a nucleus of pure-bred flocks—Merino from South Africa, Merino-Fleisch from Germany or